

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 6751

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### C 323 L 08

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Allowing individuals who left work to enter certain apprenticeship programs to receive unemployment insurance benefits.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Roach, Pridemore, McDermott, Keiser, Franklin and Kline).

#### **Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce, Research & Development** **House Committee on Commerce & Labor**

**Background:** Under Washington's unemployment compensation law, an individual is eligible to receive unemployment benefits if they: (1) worked at least 680 hours in covered employment in the base year; (2) are separated from employment through no fault of their own or leave work for good cause; and (3) are able to work and are actively searching for suitable work.

There are ten "good cause" provisions established in unemployment compensation law: to accept other work; illness or disability, so long as the individual is not entitled to reinstatement; to relocate for the spouse's mandatory military transfer; to protect the claimant or an immediate family member from domestic violence; a reduction of 25 percent or more in compensation; a reduction of 25 percent or more in hours; a change in the worksite that causes increased distance or difficulty of travel; deterioration of work site safety; illegal activities in the worksite; or a change in the individual's usual work that violates his or her religious convictions or sincere beliefs.

Employers are required to pay contributions (payroll taxes) to finance unemployment benefits, unless they are exempt from coverage or reimburse the Employment Security Department for benefits paid to their former workers. Contribution rates are based, in part, on layoff experience and benefits charged to employers' experience rating accounts. Some benefits are pooled within the unemployment system. These "socialized costs" include "noncharged benefits."

**Summary:** An additional "good cause" is established, covering individuals who left work to enter an apprenticeship program approved by the Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council.

Benefits paid to such individuals are payable beginning Sunday of the week before the apprenticeship program begins, and are not charged to the experience rating account of their employer.

#### **Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 35 13

House 62 32 (House amended)  
Senate 32 16 (Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 12, 2008